

Application Serial No. 10/736,083

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Reply Dated: July 7, 2004

Reply to the Office Action dated: 04/07/2004

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated April 7, 2004, claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a). Claim 19 is allowed. Claims 4, 5, 8-13, 17, and 18 are indicated as being allowable if written to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph and to include all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

In view of the amendment of certain claims to independent, allowable form, and for the reasons set forth hereafter, it is respectfully submitted that all rejections have been overcome such that all the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claim 1 has been amended to address the terminology noted by the Examiner. Claims 1-18 are, therefore, submitted to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) in view of Pruehs. As the subject matter of claims 2 and 3 has been incorporated into claim 1, the rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Pruehs in view of Williams will be also be applied against claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 14-16.

The Examiner cites Pruehs for teaching a housing, connector means and ejector means. The Examiner also cites Pruehs for a cover mounted over an end of a housing. The Examiner acknowledges that Pruehs does not disclose at least one aperture formed between the cover and the end of the housing for permitting gas flow from an interior of the housing externally of the cover. The Examiner cites Williams for this feature, and concludes that it could have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the apparatus of Pruehs by including an aperture as taught by Williams in order to permit the escape of any pressurized gas.

However, it is respectfully submitted, that the Examiner has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness to support a combination of Pruehs and

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Williams sufficient to reject Applicants' invention as set forth in claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 14-16.

Briefly, Williams discloses an electrical power meter and installing/removing apparatus which includes a hollow tubular sleeve member mountable over the outer side surface of a watt-hour meter side wall or cover. The cover in this instance is the typical glass dome mounted over the meter components and coupled to the meter base. The apparatus of Williams specifically is defined as including a transparent, circular protective disc 28 mounted within an inner annular groove in the end portion of the sleeve. The disc is formed of a suitable shatter-proof material to protect a user during installation and removal of the meter in the event of explosion of the meter cover. The side wall of the sleeve is formed with a number of vent ports 32.

Thus, it is clear from the specific definition and drawing of Williams that the cover 28 is fixedly secured to the one end of the housing. The vent port or apertures in Williams are formed in the side wall of the sleeve spaced from the cover or disc 28 and not between the cover and the end of the housing as in Applicants' invention defined in claim 1.

Williams is devoid of any formation of the vent ports or apertures between the cover and the end of the housing as the vent port in Williams are clearly formed in the side wall spaced from the end of the housing to which the cover 28 is mounted.

Since Williams is devoid of this feature, it is respectfully submitted that a *prima facie* case of obviousness based on a combination of Pruehs and Williams to reject Applicants' invention as set forth in claim 1 has not been established. Thus, Applicants' invention as set forth in claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 14-16 is submitted to patentably define over Pruehs and Williams, even if combinable in the manner posed by the Examiner.

Claim 19 has been allowed. Claims 4, 5, 8-13, 17, and 18 are indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112,

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second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any of the beginning claims. Accordingly, claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 13, 17, and 18 have been amended to independent form including all limitations of the original base claim and any original intervening claims. As such, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4, 5, 8-13, 17, and 18 are also in allowable condition.

In the Office Action, the Examiner cites what the references fail to teach, disclose, or suggest, either alone or in combination. The Examiner's explanation of the reasons for allowance of claims 4, 5, 8-13, 17, and 18 is appreciated. However, it is respectfully submitted that the explanation is unclear as to which of the listed features applies to which combination of elements as the allowable claims present features of Applicants' inventions in several different combinations. It is submitted that the Examiner's accumulation of all of the inventive features into one description may be read as limiting Applicants' invention to an inclusion of all of the features.

It is respectfully submitted that a clear reasons for allowance would include a listing of the features and the associated claims. Applicants submit the following for the Examiner's consideration:

The reference fail to teach, disclose, or suggest, either alone or in combination, a plurality of radially extending, circumferentially spaced ribs carried on the cover and engagable with the housing to form a plurality of apertures between the cover and the housing (claim 4), a peripheral lip extending from the cover toward the housing to a first end, the peripheral lip directing gas flow from the interior of the housing to a first end, the peripheral lip directing gas flow from the interior of the housing away from the cover (claim 5), the primary handle includes two spaced side legs fixedly engaged at one end to the cover, and a central leg extending between another end of the side legs and spaced from the cover (claim 8), at least one ejector arm connected to the ejector handle and extending to a distal end spaced exteriorly of an end of the housing, the distal end of the ejector arm movable with respect to the housing upon movement of the ejector handle from the first position to the second

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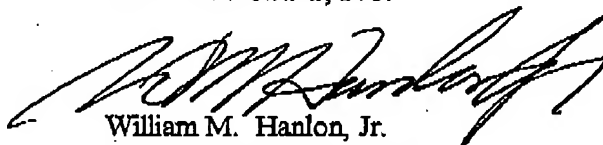
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position to separate the housing from an electrical component (**claim 11**), the handle means having a portion aligned with and guardingly spaced from the portion of the actuator extending through the aperture in the cover (**claim 19**), at least a portion of the actuator (**claim 17**), the peripheral lip extending from the first plane of the cover to an end spaced from the exterior surface of the cover (**claim 18**); and in combination with the rest of the limitations of the base and intermediate claims. (**Bold emphases added by Applicants to indicate Applicants proposed clarifying language**).

In summary, for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 4-19 are in condition for allowance; a notice of which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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